

6 级专属词汇拔高课 5 讲

第一讲-香蕉危机 -A threat to bananas

课前词汇准备 1:

匹配以下词汇和意思 match the words with meanings

a plantation	to quarantine	a shoot	a stem	lucrative	fungus	a monoculture	resistant
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makes a lot of profit

a baby plant

the long thin part of a plant

the family that mushrooms belong to

not affected by something

a large area where crops are grown, for example tea and coffee

one kind of crop with no others grown for variety

to isolate something so that nothing else can touch it or be affected by it

正文:

In the 1950s, Central American commercial banana growers were facing the death of their most lucrative product, the Gros Michel banana, known as Big Mike. And now it ' s happening again to Big Mike ' s successor - the Cavendish.

With its easily transported, thick-skinned and sweet-tasting fruit, the Gros Michel banana plant dominated the plantations of Central America. United Fruit, the main grower and exporter in South America at the time, mass-produced its bananas in the most efficient way possible: it cloned shoots from the stems of plants instead of growing plants from seeds, and cultivated them in densely packed fields.

Unfortunately, these conditions are also perfect for the spread of the fungus *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense*, which attacks the plant ' s roots and prevents it from transporting water to the stem and leaves. The TR-1 strain of the fungus was resistant to crop sprays and travelled around on boots or the tyres of trucks, slowly infecting plantations across the region. In an attempt to escape the fungus, farmers abandoned infected fields, flooded them and then replanted crops somewhere else, often cutting down rainforest to do so.

Their efforts failed. So, instead, they searched for a variety of banana that the fungus didn't affect. They found the Cavendish, as it was called, in the greenhouse of a British duke. It wasn't as well suited to shipping as the Gros Michel, but its bananas tasted good enough to keep consumers happy. Most importantly, TR-1 didn't seem to affect it. In a few years, United Fruit had saved itself from bankruptcy by filling its plantations with thousands of the new plants, copying the same monoculture growing conditions Gros Michel had thrived in.

While the operation was a huge success for the Latin American industry, the Cavendish banana itself is far from safe. In 2014, South East Asia, another major banana producer, exported four million tons of Cavendish bananas. But, in 2015, its exports had dropped by 46 per cent thanks to a combination of another strain of the fungus, TR-4, and bad weather.

Growing practices in South East Asia haven't helped matters. Growers can't always afford the expensive lab-based methods to clone plants from shoots without spreading the disease. Also, they often aren't strict enough about cleaning farm equipment and quarantining infected fields. As a result, the fungus has spread to Australia, the Middle East and Mozambique – and Latin America, heavily dependent on its monoculture Cavendish crops, could easily be next.

Racing against the inevitable, scientists are working on solving the problem by genetically modifying the Cavendish with genes from TR-4-resistant banana species. Researchers at the Queensland University of Technology have successfully grown two kinds of modified plant which have remained resistant for three years so far. But some experts think this is just a sophisticated version of the same temporary solution the original Cavendish provided. If the new bananas are planted in the same monocultures as the Cavendish and the Gros Michel before it, the risk is that another strain of the disease may rise up to threaten the modified plants too.

Tasks

Task 1

Circle the best answer.

1. Mass-produced bananas are ...
 - a. grown from seeds because its efficient.
 - b. cloned because it's a fast and cheap way to grow them.
 - c. sweeter than other bananas.
 - d. exported to Central America.
2. The spread of the TR- 1 strain was ...
 - a. caused by lack of water.
 - b. speeded up by the flooding of banana fields.
 - c. slowed down by crop spraying.
 - d. helped by the movement of people and vehicles.
3. Which sentence is NOT true?
 - a. The Cavendish replaced the Gros Michel.
 - b. The Cavendish bananas were easier to transport than the Gros Michel.
 - c. The Cavendish was resistant.
 - d. The Cavendish stopped United Fruit from losing more money.
4. South East Asia's Cavendish exports fell in 2015 because ...
 - a. a new strain of the fungus had developed.
 - b. farmers can't afford new farming technology.
 - c. they had to quarantine their fruit.
 - d. they depended too much on other countries.
5. Genetically modifying bananas may ...
 - a. mean farmers can grow the Gros Michel again.
 - b. cause farmers to repeat the mistakes of the past.
 - c. encourage farmers to try new growing methods.
 - d. only be a short-term solution.
6. How would you describe the writer's opinion about the future of the Cavendish?
 - a. Optimistic
 - b. Pessimistic
 - c. Cautious
 - d. Uninterested

Task 2

Complete the notes.

grows easily	South East Asia	TR-1	flooding banana fields	tastes good enough
to new locations	ships well	TR-4	genetically modifying crops	Central America

GROS MICHEL

1. Vulnerable to the strain of the fungus *Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. cubense*
2. Suitable for commercial use because it and tastes sweet
3. At risk in
4. Attempts to save the banana: moving and

CAVENDISH

5. Suitable for commercial use because it and for consumers
6. Vulnerable to the strain of the fungus *Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. cubense*
7. At risk in
8. Attempt to save the banana:

Discussion

What do you think of the solution to genetically modify the Cavendish banana?

Answers

1. e

2. d
3. f
4. a
5. b
6. c
7. h
8. g

1. b

1. b

2. d
3. b
4. a
5. d
6. c

1. TR- 1

2. ships well
3. Central America
4. to new locations/flooding banana fields
5. grows easily/tastes good enough
6. TR-4
7. South East Asia
8. genetically modifying crops

5

第二讲-人类语言演化 -How humans evolved language

课前词汇准备 1: 匹配以下词汇和意思 match the words with meanings

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. a chimpanzee
2. linguistics
3. evolutionary
4. civilised
5. to mutate
6. DNA
7. innate
8. an artefact

Definitions

- a. the study of language
- b. relating to the way in which living things develop over millions of years
- c. a species of ape
- d. existing in us since birth; natural rather than learned
- e. an object made by a human, especially one that is of historical interest
- f. socially advanced and developed
- g. to change into something different
- h. a chemical that carries genetic information

A

Thanks to the field of linguistics we know much about the development of the 5,000 plus languages in existence today. We can describe their grammar and pronunciation and see how their spoken and written forms have changed over time. For example, we understand the origins of the Indo-European group of languages, which includes Norwegian, Hindi and English, and can trace them back to tribes in eastern Europe in about 3000 BC.

So, we have mapped out a great deal of the history of language, but there are still areas we know little about. Experts are beginning to look to the field of evolutionary biology to find out how the human species developed to be able to use language. So far, there are far more questions and half-theories than answers.

B

We know that human language is far more complex than that of even our nearest and most intelligent relatives like chimpanzees. We can express complex thoughts, convey subtle emotions and communicate about abstract concepts such as past and future. And we do this following a set of structural rules, known as grammar. Do only humans use an innate system of rules to govern the order of words? Perhaps not, as some research may suggest dolphins share this capability because they are able to recognise when these rules are broken.

C

If we want to know where our capability for complex language came from, we need to look at how our brains are different from other animals. This relates to more than just brain size; it is important what other things our brains can do and when and why they evolved that way. And for this there are very few physical clues; artefacts left by our ancestors don't tell us what speech they were capable of making. One thing we can see in the remains of early humans, however, is the development of the mouth, throat and tongue. By about 100,000 years ago, humans had evolved the ability to create complex sounds. Before that, evolutionary biologists can only guess whether or not early humans communicated using more basic sounds.

D

Another question is, what is it about human brains that allowed language to evolve in a way that it did not in other primates? At some point, our brains became able to make our mouths produce vowel and consonant sounds, and we developed the capacity to invent words to name things around us. These were the basic ingredients for complex language. The next change would have been to put those words into sentences, similar to the 'protolanguage' children use when they first learn to speak. No one knows if the next step – adding grammar to signal past, present and future, for example, or plurals and relative clauses – required a further development in the human brain or was simply a response to our increasingly civilised way of living together.

Between 100,000 and 50,000 years ago, though, we start to see the evidence of early human civilisation, through cave paintings for example; no one knows the connection between this and language. Brains didn't suddenly get bigger, yet humans did become more complex and more intelligent. Was it using language that caused their brains to develop? Or did their more complex brains start producing language?

E

More questions lie in looking at the influence of genetics on brain and language development. Are there genes that mutated and gave us language ability? Researchers have found a gene mutation that occurred between 200,000 and 100,000 years ago, which seems to have a connection with speaking and how our brains control our mouths and face. Monkeys have a similar gene, but it did not undergo this mutation. It's too early to say how much influence genes have on language, but one day the answers might be found in our DNA.

Task 1

Match the headings with the parts of the text (A–E).

What we know	How linguistic capacity evolved	How unique are we?
The physical evidence	The tiny change that may separate us from monkeys	

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.

Task 2

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
1. Experts fully understand how the Hindi language developed.	True	False
2. The grammar of dolphin language follows the same rules as human language.	True	False
3. Brain size is not the only factor in determining language capability.	True	False
4. The language of very young children has something in common with the way our prehistoric ancestors may have spoken.	True	False
5. When people started using complex language, their brains got bigger.	True	False
6. The role of genetics in language capacity is not yet clear.	True	False

Discussion

Do you think monkeys and dolphins have complex language like humans do?

Answers

Preparation task

1. c
2. a
3. b
4. f
5. g
6. h
7. d
8. e

Task 1

- A. What we know
- B. How unique are we?
- C. The physical evidence
- D. How linguistic capacity evolved
- E. The tiny change that may separate us from monkeys

Task 2

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. False
6. True

[illegible]

第三讲-商业中的文化行为 Cultural behaviour in business

课前词汇准备 1: 匹配以下词汇和意思 match the words with meanings

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. stark
2. to be conceived as
3. to break the ice
4. nuances
5. to stand someone in good stead
6. pompous
7. to pigeonhole someone
8. mundane

Definitions

- a. subtle differences in meaning
- b. to be useful to someone in the future
- c. arrogant and self-important
- d. extreme and obvious, often used with 'difference' or 'contrast'
- e. to be thought of as
- f. boring, uninteresting or ordinary
- g. to do something that helps relieve the tension and get conversation going, especially between people meeting for the first time
- h. to label someone and put them in a restrictive category

Much of today's business is conducted across international borders, and while the majority of the global business community might share the use of English as a common language, the nuances and expectations of business communication might differ greatly from culture to culture. A lack of understanding of the cultural norms and practices of our business acquaintances can result in unfair judgements, misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication. Here are three basic areas of differences in the business etiquette around the world that could help stand you in good stead when you next find yourself working with someone from a different culture.

Addressing someone

When discussing this topic in a training course, a German trainee and a British trainee got into a hot debate about whether it was appropriate for someone with a doctorate to use the corresponding title on their business card. The British trainee maintained that anyone who wasn't a medical doctor expecting to be addressed as 'Dr' was disgustingly pompous and full of themselves. The German trainee, however, argued that the hard work and years of education put into earning that PhD should give them full rights to expect to be addressed as 'Dr'.

This stark difference in opinion over something that could be conceived as minor and thus easily overlooked goes to show that we often attach meaning to even the most mundane practices. When things that we are used to are done differently, it could spark the strongest reactions in us. While many Continental Europeans and Latin Americans prefer to be addressed with a title, for example Mr or Ms and their surname when meeting someone in a business context for the first time, Americans, and increasingly the British, now tend to prefer using their first names. The best thing to do is to listen and observe how your conversation partner addresses you and, if you are still unsure, do not be afraid to ask them how they would like to be addressed.

Smiling

A famous Russian proverb states that 'a smile without reason is a sign of idiocy' and a so-called 'smile of respect' is seen as insincere and often regarded with suspicion in Russia. Yet in countries like the United States, Australia and Britain, smiling is often interpreted as a sign of openness, friendship and respect, and is frequently used to break the ice.

In a piece of research done on smiles across cultures, the researchers found that smiling individuals were considered more intelligent than non-smiling people in countries such as Germany, Switzerland, China and Malaysia. However, in countries like Russia, Japan, South Korea and Iran, pictures of smiling faces were rated as less intelligent than the non-smiling ones. Meanwhile, in countries like India, Argentina and the Maldives, smiling was associated with dishonesty.

Eye contact

An American or British person might be looking their client in the eye to show that they are paying full attention to what is being said, but if that client is from Japan or Korea, they might find the direct eye contact awkward or even disrespectful. In parts of South America and Africa, prolonged eye contact could also be seen as challenging authority. In the Middle East, eye contact across genders is considered inappropriate, although eye contact within a gender could signify honesty and truthfulness.

Having an increased awareness of the possible differences in expectations and behaviour can help us avoid cases of miscommunication, but it is vital that we also remember that

cultural stereotypes can be detrimental to building good business relationships. Although national cultures could play a part in shaping the way we behave and think, we are also largely influenced by the region we come from, the communities we associate with, our age and gender, our corporate culture and our individual experiences of the world. The knowledge of the potential differences should therefore be something we keep at the back of our minds, rather than something that we use to pigeonhole the individuals of an entire nation.

1. The British trainee felt that people who want to be addressed as 'Dr' must be ...
 - a. hard-working.
 - b. conceited and self-important.
 - c. doing a medical degree.
 - d. from Germany.
2. If you are not sure how to address someone, you should ...
 - a. use the title you see on their business card.
 - b. make your decision based on cultural stereotypes about their country.
 - c. address them the way you'd like to be addressed.
 - d. ask them what they would like you to call them.
3. There might be a misunderstanding if an American smiles at a Russian business associate because the Russian might think that the American is ...
 - a. being fake.
 - b. challenging their authority.
 - c. trying to break the ice.
 - d. disrespectful.
4. The Japanese, South Koreans and Iranians might interpret a smiling face as being ...
 - a. friendlier.
 - b. less open.
 - c. not as intelligent.
 - d. dishonest.
5. Americans and British people sometimes use eye contact to show that they ...
 - a. like the speaker.
 - b. are really listening to what is being said.
 - c. are honest and truthful.
 - d. are attending to every need of the speaker.

6. The last paragraph warns the reader not to ...
- a. engage in international business.
 - b. let national cultures shape the way we behave and think.
 - c. let miscommunication damage our business relationships.
 - d. overgeneralise using our knowledge of cultural stereotypes.

Task 2

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
1. When doing business internationally, there is a possibility that we might misinterpret what each other is saying even though we are speaking the same language.	True	False
2. To the German trainee, having a PhD is equivalent to being a medical doctor.	True	False
3. Sometimes, the smallest things can trigger a huge emotional response in us, especially when they are things we are not used to.	True	False
4. In the research done to the perceptions of smiles, people from different countries were asked to rate photos of smiling faces and non-smiling faces.	True	False
5. Making eye contact can be interpreted in different ways in different cultures but is almost always a positive thing.	True	False
6. The writer recommends keeping possible cultural differences in the forefront of our minds when doing business with people with different cultures.	True	False

Discussion

What practices have you encountered that seemed strange or even inappropriate to you?

Answers

Preparation task

1. d
2. e
3. g
4. a
5. b
6. c
7. h
8. f

Task 1

[illegible]

1. b
2. d
3. a
4. c
5. b
6. d

Task 2

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. False
6. False

第四讲-素食主义 veganism

课前词汇准备 1: 匹配以下词汇和意思 match the words with meanings

‘All life deserves respect, dignity and compassion. All life.’ – Anthony Douglas Williams

What is veganism and what do vegans do?

Vegans try to live, as much as possible, in a way that avoids exploiting and being cruel to animals. This means following a plant-based diet. Vegans do not eat animals or animal-based products like meat, fish, seafood, eggs, honey and dairy products such as cheese. For many vegans, living a committed vegan lifestyle means not wearing clothes made from animal skins and avoiding any products which have been tested on animals.

How are vegans different from vegetarians?

Vegetarians don't eat meat or fish but they can eat eggs, honey and dairy products, but vegans don't eat any animal-based food products. Vegans argue that suffering is caused in the production of these foods, for example they say that, on some dairy farms, male calves are killed because they are too expensive to keep, and on some farms, cows are killed when they get older and produce less milk. Similarly, on some egg farms, male chicks are killed because they do not produce eggs. As for honey, vegans say that bees make honey for bees, not for humans, and that bees' health can suffer when humans take the honey from them. Vegans believe that the products they use and consume should be free from not just cruelty but any exploitation of animals.

When did veganism start?

The Vegan Society was founded in 1944, but there is evidence of people deciding not to consume animal products over 2,000 years ago. The sixth-century BC Greek mathematician and philosopher Pythagoras was in favour of kindness to all species, and his diet could be described as vegetarian. There was a tradition of vegetarianism in the Indus Valley, Babylonian and ancient Egyptian civilisations even earlier. The Vegan Society points out that in 1806, the famous romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley was one of the first people to publicly object to eating eggs and dairy products on moral grounds.

Why do many people decide to become vegan?

For many people, the main reason for going vegan is probably that they believe that animals and all other sentient beings should have the right to life and freedom. However, there are other reasons. Vegans argue that the production of meat and other animal products is very bad for the environment. They point out that a huge quantity of water is needed to grow grain to feed animals in the meat industry. The enormous amount of grain which the meat industry needs often leads to forests being cut down and habitats being lost. In contrast, much lower quantities of grain and water are needed to sustain a vegan diet. In addition, many vegans say that all the nutrients our bodies need are contained in a carefully planned vegan diet and that this type of diet helps prevent some diseases.

What is World Vegan Day?

On 1 November every year, vegans all over the world celebrate their way of life. There are workshops, exhibitions and public debates on World Vegan Day, and it is a wonderful opportunity for anybody thinking of becoming a vegan to learn more about the subject.

Tasks

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
1. Vegans eat fish and seafood.	True	False
2. Vegans wear clothes made from the skin of an animal.	True	False
3. Vegans do not eat some things that vegetarians do.	True	False
4. More than 2,000 years ago, some people took a decision not to eat animals and animal products.	True	False
5. Many people become vegan because of a concern for the environment.	True	False
6. A variety of activities take place on World Vegan Day.	True	False

Task 2

Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

avoids	diet	object
opportunity	quantity	suffer

1. Vegans try to live in a way that exploiting and being cruel to animals.
2. Vegans say that bees' health can when humans take honey from them.
3. Percy Bysshe Shelley was one of the first people to publicly to eating eggs and dairy products on moral grounds.
4. A huge of water is needed to grow grain to feed animals in the meat industry.
5. Many vegans say that all the nutrients our bodies need are contained in a carefully planned vegan
6. World Vegan Day is a wonderful for anybody thinking of becoming a vegan to learn more about the subject.

Discussion

Would you consider becoming a vegan? If you already are a vegan, how did you choose to become one?

Answers

Preparation task

1. d
2. h
3. g
4. a
5. b
6. e
7. f
8. c

1. False
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. True
6. True

Task 2

1. avoids
2. suffer
3. object
4. quantity
5. diet
6. opportunity

Task 1

[illegible]

第五讲-可持续性超市 Sustainable supermarkets

课前词汇准备 1: 匹配以下词汇和意思 match the words with meanings

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. a backlash
2. a pact
3. to come under fire
4. an unethical act
5. to take matters into your own hands
6. the lion's share
7. surplus
8. to operate under a veil of secrecy

Definitions

- a. to be criticised strongly
- b. an action that is morally wrong
- c. a strong negative reaction by a large number of people
- d. a formal agreement between parties
- e. excess; extra; oversupply
- f. to work in a way that hides embarrassing information
- g. to deal with a problem yourself after others have failed to do so
- h. the largest part of something

Many of the major supermarket chains have come under fire with accusations of various unethical acts over the past decade. They've wasted tonnes of food, they've underpaid their suppliers and they've contributed to excessive plastic waste in their packaging, which has had its impact on our environment.

But supermarkets and grocers are starting to sit up and take notice. In response to growing consumer backlash against the huge amounts of plastic waste generated by plastic packaging, some of the largest UK supermarkets have signed up to a pact promising to transform packaging and cut plastic wastage. In a pledge to reuse, recycle or compost all plastic wastage by 2025, supermarkets are now beginning to take some responsibility for the part they play in contributing to the damage to our environment, with one major supermarket announcing their plan to eliminate all plastic packaging in their own-brand products by 2023.

In response to criticisms over food waste, some supermarkets are donating some of their food surplus. However, charities estimate that they are only accessing two per cent of

supermarkets' total food surplus, so this hardly seems to be solving the problem. Some say that supermarkets are simply not doing enough. Most supermarkets operate under a veil of secrecy when asked for exact figures of food wastage, and without more transparency it is hard to come up with a systematic approach to avoiding waste and to redistributing surplus food.

Some smaller companies are now taking matters into their own hands and offering consumers a greener, more environmentally friendly option. Shops like Berlin's Original Unverpakt and London's Bulk Market are plastic-free shops that have opened in recent years, encouraging customers to use their own containers or compostable bags. Online grocer Farmdrop eliminates the need for large warehouses and the risk of huge food surplus by delivering fresh produce from local farmers to its customers on a daily basis via electric cars, offering farmers the lion's share of the retail price.

There is no doubt that we still have a long way to go in reducing food waste and plastic waste. But perhaps the major supermarkets might take inspiration from these smaller grocers and gradually move towards a more sustainable future for us all.

Tasks

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
	True	False
1. More and more people want supermarkets to reduce the amount of plastic waste they produce.	True	False
2. By 2025, many of the major supermarkets will have stopped using plastic in their in-house products.	True	False
3. Supermarkets are still denying that plastic packaging can cause damage to our environment.	True	False
4. Supermarkets are not telling people how much food they are actually wasting.	True	False
5. There is a grocer in Berlin that doesn't allow customers to use their own containers.	True	False
6. Farmdrop doesn't store large amounts of food and so doesn't produce unnecessary waste.	True	False
7. Farmers supplying food to Farmdrop get a small fraction of the price that customers pay.	True	False
8. The author believes that small shops like Bulk Market and Farmdrop will eventually take over the major supermarkets.	True	False

Task 2

Complete the text with words from the box.

transparent	promised	criticised	excess
reduce	produce	rid	packaging

Two of the things that major supermarkets have been (1)..... for are the waste of large amounts of (2)..... food and unnecessary plastic usage in a lot of product (3)..... . Some supermarkets have (4)..... to try and (5)..... plastic wastage, and one supermarket has said that it would get (6)..... of all plastic packaging from its own in-house brands. Meanwhile, many supermarkets are not very (7)..... about the exact amount of food that is going to waste and so it's hard for charities to know how to redistribute this surplus (8)..... .

Discussion

What other environmentally friendly measures should supermarkets and other shops take?

Answers

Preparation task

1. c
2. d
3. a
4. b
5. g
6. h
7. e
8. f

Task 1

1. True
2. False
3. False

4. True
5. False
6. True
7. False
8. False

Task 2

1. criticised
2. excess
3. packaging
4. promised
5. reduce
6. rid
7. transparent
8. produce

